

**“Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes**  
**Selection Test B**

**Critical Reading** *Identify the letter of the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.*

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Why does Roger lose his balance when he tries to steal Mrs. Jones’s purse in “Thank You, M’am”?
- A. Mrs. Jones kicks him.
  - B. Mrs. Jones is very large.
  - C. The purse is very heavy.
  - D. Roger is weighed down by guilt.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. What is Mrs. Jones’s first reaction to Roger’s attempt to steal her purse in “Thank You, M’am”?
- A. She is puzzled.
  - B. She is frightened.
  - C. She is angry.
  - D. She is deeply hurt.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. In “Thank You, M’am,” what does Mrs. Jones do when Roger struggles to get away?
- A. She jerks him in front of her, wrestles him with one arm, and drags him up the street.
  - B. She shouts very loudly for help, frightening the boy into staying at her side.
  - C. She warns him that she will call the police and that they will track him down.
  - D. She hits him over the head with her purse and knocks him to the ground.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. In “Thank You, M’am,” what can you infer from reading that Roger has no one at home to wash his face?
- A. He is shy.
  - B. He is neglected at home.
  - C. He has trouble telling the truth.
  - D. He has a good sense of humor.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. According to Mrs. Jones in “Thank You, M’am,” what lesson has Roger not been taught?
- A. why “early to bed and early to rise” is true
  - B. how to apologize
  - C. how to steal a purse without getting caught
  - D. the difference between right and wrong
- \_\_\_\_ 6. In “Thank You, M’am,” what can you infer about Mrs. Jones from this remark?  
“When I get through with you, sir, you are going to remember Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones.”
- A. She respects whomever she speaks to.
  - B. She is a conceited showoff.
  - C. She is a strong-minded person.
  - D. She intends to do physical harm to Roger.

- \_\_\_ 7. In “Thank You, M’am,” when Mrs. Jones brings Roger home, what does he first fear she will do?
- A. poison him with the food she serves
  - B. hit him over the head again
  - C. bore him to death with her stories
  - D. turn him in to the police
- \_\_\_ 8. In “Thank You, M’am,” why does Roger sit on the far side of the room when Mrs. Jones goes behind the screen?
- A. He is frightened that she is phoning the police and wants to see what she is doing.
  - B. He does not want to smell the food she is cooking because it will make his stomach growl.
  - C. He wants her to see that he is not taking anything from her purse.
  - D. He wants to be where she cannot see him so that he can take money from her purse.
- \_\_\_ 9. In “Thank You, M’am,” how does Mrs. Jones’s admission that she did bad things when young reveal a theme of the story?
- A. She brags about her youthful adventures so that Roger will be humble in her presence.
  - B. She is older and lonely and needs to confide in someone younger.
  - C. She wants to be the adult whom Roger trusts to understand and help him.
  - D. She wants to prove to Roger that all teenagers are delinquents.
- \_\_\_ 10. The author of “Thank You, M’am” calls Mrs. Jones “a large woman.” What might *large* apply to besides her size?
- A. her large amount of money
  - B. her large number of friends
  - C. her large heart
  - D. her large temper
- \_\_\_ 11. In “Thank You, M’am,” what does Mrs. Jones mean by telling Roger that “shoes come by devilish like that will burn your feet”?
- A. The devil wears hot shoes.
  - B. People who buy shoes with stolen money often go to jail.
  - C. Shoes that do not fit will pinch your toes.
  - D. Get shoes with stolen money, and guilt will burn your feet.
- \_\_\_ 12. In “Thank You, M’am,” Mrs. Jones says she would have given Roger money for shoes if he had simply asked. Roger pauses for a long time. What can you infer from that pause?
- A. He is surprised, touched, and confused by her offer.
  - B. He is growing more suspicious of Mrs. Jones.
  - C. He is not used to washing his face, so he is taking his time.
  - D. He is plotting ways to get more money from Mrs. Jones.

- \_\_\_ 13. Which statement is a main theme of “Thank You, M’am”?
- A. Lonely, older people seek company even from those who harm them.
  - B. Kindness and goodwill are stronger than fear and mistrust.
  - C. If you are going to steal, do not get caught.
  - D. City streets are full of dangers for young and old alike.

### Vocabulary and Grammar

- \_\_\_ 14. Which place would best be described as *barren*?
- A. a lush garden in summer
  - B. an empty beach in winter
  - C. a dirty, crowded subway car
  - D. a football field during an exciting play
- \_\_\_ 15. In which sentence is *presentable* used correctly?
- A. The past is over, so it is time to focus on what is presentable.
  - B. I wore my oldest shirt to be presentable.
  - C. At the wedding, the gifts were piled high on the presentable table.
  - D. I combed my hair to look more presentable.
- \_\_\_ 16. Which sentence would come first in a story about a lion and a woman at the circus?
- A. The lion has roared for hours.
  - B. The woman had entered the tent with a lion.
  - C. I have never enjoyed a circus more.
  - D. The circus will have departed by tomorrow.
- \_\_\_ 17. Which verb form correctly completes this sentence?
- By tomorrow, the show \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. had ended
  - B. has ended
  - C. ended
  - D. will have ended

### Essay

18. Why do you think Mrs. Jones treats Roger as she does in “Thank You, M’am”? Write a short essay explaining your ideas. Focus on the kind of person Mrs. Jones is and on her behavior in taking Roger home and treating him kindly.
19. Write a short essay about the title “Thank You, M’am.” Explain why you think Langston Hughes used this remark, which, in the final paragraph, Roger thinks of but does not voice, as the title for the whole story.